

Quarantine & Isolation

In the event of a flu pandemic the Vermont Department of Health may ask you to follow Quarantine or Isolation precautions. Quarantine of exposed persons, and isolation of sick persons, are public health strategies that help stop the spread of infectious disease, and help keep you, your family and fellow Vermonters healthy.

Quarantine: for people who have been exposed but are not sick

Quarantine refers to keeping people who are not sick but have been exposed to a dangerous infectious agent apart from others. You may be asked to stay at home or another location. This public health measure may be compared with ‘snow days,’ when travel is temporarily restricted. Quarantine is used to prevent the spread of infection to other people. If you have been exposed to an infectious agent, you might spread the infection to other people even before you start to feel sick.

Isolation: for people who are sick

Isolation refers to the separation of people who are sick from people who are not. Keeping people who are sick away from others can help prevent the spread of the illness to others. Medical care is given to people in isolation. Safety measures are used when having contact with, or providing care to sick people.

You will be asked to remain in isolation for a period of time until you can no longer spread the infection.

Who can impose quarantine?

Quarantine may be undertaken voluntarily or requested by public health authorities.

How long does quarantine last?

The Vermont Department of Health will tell you how long you need to be quarantined. The length of time depends on the how long it takes to know if a person is sick or not. People who have been quarantined are often asked to stay at home, and not go to school, work or shopping.

During this time, please follow good personal hygiene: Wash your hands regularly, cover your cough or sneezes, dispose of tissues properly, and stay at least 3 feet from people who have not been exposed.

What should I do if I start to feel sick?

If you develop symptoms associated with pandemic flu please call your doctor.

Symptoms of pandemic flu may include:

- Fever
- Chills
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Muscle aches
- Headache
- Difficulty breathing
- Diarrhea
- Conjunctivitis (Eye infections)

For more information on isolation or quarantine dial **211**.

For the latest updates check the Vermont Department of Health website **HealthVermont.gov**